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Abuses in the Appointment of Subordinate  
Officers and Employees of the  
House of Representatives.

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A REVIEW OF THE REPORT OF THE  
MOODY COMMITTEE

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PREPARED BY THE  
INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE

OF THE

National Civil-Service Reform League.

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## Abuses in the Appointment of Subordinate Officers and Employees of the House of Representatives

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TO THE COUNCIL OF THE NATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE:

Your Committee appointed to inquire into the condition of the Federal Civil Service desires to present for consideration, as a glaring illustration of the evils of the spoils system, the abuses existing in the service of the House of Representatives, which were disclosed by the so-called Moody Committee on the 28th of February last. The entire investigation made by the Committee had to be completed within six days, hence the report was hastily prepared, and, while its general conclusions were admirably stated, it omits many details which exhibit in a striking light the deformity and grotesqueness of the abuses revealed by the evidence. Your Committee believe that a more particular account of the corruption, extravagance and inefficiency which have resulted from the patronage system still in force in this branch of the service should be given to the public.

While the subordinates in these places are nominally appointed by their superior officers—the Clerk of the House, the Doorkeeper, etc., the places are really apportioned as patronage among different Members of Congress, mostly among those belonging to the party in power. The system under which this apportionment has been made, and under which subordinates of virtually every class have been selected, Mr. Glenn, the door-keeper, very frankly describes as follows:

Q. Suppose a Member of Congress to whom an individual appointment is charged desires to change his appointee, what is done in that case?

A. I immediately change it.

Q. Irrespective of the capacity of the employee or of his successor?

A. Yes, sir. I sometimes make requests for different positions to bring a certain kind of man in. Sometimes it is done; sometimes it is not.

Q. Suppose some Member fails to be renominated and his successor of the same party is chosen?

A. When Congress adjourns, his successor succeeds to his position or a smaller one. A new Member is not given—

Q. That is to say, in order to remain in the service of the House, speaking generally, a man has to have behind him the endorsement of some Member?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. The effect of this is, of course, the House officers become responsible for the work of their subordinates without any power of selection?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. The effect often is to lose a man who has gained experience and become efficient and to replace him with some other?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Can there be under such a system as that, under anyone's administration, any successful service?

A. I do not think there can be as successful as if men were selected for the exact duties they are to perform. (Testimony, Special Investigation of House Employees, p. 65.)

One of the many abuses resulting inevitably from this system is that persons who are appointed and paid to do certain duties are transferred from their positions, and set to work at occupations which are entirely different. There are some amusing cases of such transfers. For instance—to quote the report of the Moody Committee:

"The place of House telegrapher is held by O. M. Enyart, who in point of fact has never served in that position, but for a time was detailed to the stationery room and then to the House library, where he now is. J. J. Constantine actually performs the duty of telegrapher, and has done so during the Fifty-fourth, Fifty-fifth, and Fifty-sixth Congresses. During this time he has been paid from an appropriation carried in the legislative act, as follows: 'Hire of horses and wagons and cartage for use of the Clerk's office, nine hundred dollars'" (Report, p. III)

Alexander McDonald, the Clerk of the House, thus explains why this is done. He says:

"Mr. Berry and a number of Democrats came to me and told me that this man Constantine had a very large family—I have forgotten the exact number, but it is way up, from eight to eleven—and that he was poor and needy, and wanted something to do, and he asked as a personal favor that I give him something to do. This was the only thing that I could control, and so I put him under the \$900 item. He gets the whole of that \$900, and then in order to do the work I pay \$40 a month to a teamster, who hauls boxes and stationery for the members." (p. 10.)

It afterwards appeared that this \$40 a month (paid to one

Richards in lieu of the \$900 appropriated) was obtained by contributions from other employees.

In the meantime, what were the duties performed by Enyart, "the telegrapher", who had been receiving \$1,200 salary for Constantine's \$900 job, who had, moreover, been demanding an appropriation of "some twenty odd hundred dollars," (p. 16) and for whom \$400 additional (making \$1,600 in all), had actually been recommended by the Clerk, who testified as follows:

Q. What has he (Enyart) done to deserve \$400 more than the \$1,200 he is already receiving?

A. I do not know.

Q. Do you know about his compiling this work, Biographical Dictionary of Congress?

A. He told me he was doing it.

Q. Did you know when he did that?

A. No, sir.

Q. Whether in working hours or otherwise?

A. I do not know. He might have worked on it in the library when there were no calls.

Q. That is a pretty leisurely place?

A. You need not necessarily perspire a great deal. (p. 17.)

Your committee appreciates the good fortune of a grateful and accurate biographer who finds himself thus rewarded by appreciative statesmanship.

Another odd appointment is that of John J. Conroy, who is carried on the rolls as page at \$500 a year, and is employed actually as driver of the House wagon. In regard to him, Mr. Glenn, the door-keeper, testifies:

"He can't read or write, and we could not do anything with him and so we assigned him to the wagon. The man employed as driver is scrubbing the floors and cleaning spittoons." (p. 76.)

Conroy himself was examined by the Committee and complained bitterly because, although employed as a driver, and being "kept out in storms, etc.," he was not getting a driver's pay, but merely a page's salary! (p. 81).

"Winthrop C. Jones," says the report of the Moody Committee, "is carried on the roll as a locksmith under the Clerk's department at a salary of \$1,440, while in point of fact he performs the duty of a messenger under the Door-keeper's department at the southwest door of the House lobby, and his duties as locksmith are performed by Daniel P. Hickling, who is on the Doorkeeper's roll as a session folder at \$75 a month. Thus the position of locksmith, the duties of which require only a payment of \$75 per month *during the session*, pays to a man who does none of its duties \$1,440 per annum. And this is not all. There

are four other men serving with Jones as messengers at the southwest lobby door. The five men all do exactly the same work, while their respective rates of pay are different. Thus, while Jones receives \$1,440, George E. Page, a folder, receives \$840, Willard Wilson, also a folder, receives \$900; John Deardorff, on the messenger's roll, receives \$1,000 and George Jenison, a special employee by House resolution, receives \$1,200 per annum.

"Jones was at the time of his appointment to the post of locksmith on the roll as a messenger, receiving \$1,000 per annum. He continued to perform the same duties after his appointment as locksmith, the net effect of the transaction being to increase his compensation \$440 a year at the expense of the person to whom that sum was really due for service performed. The whole transaction is so instructive that we report a part of the testimony relating to it:

"The Chairman: Daniel P. Hickling is performing the duties of locksmith?

Major McDowell: Yes, sir.

Q. Did he not hold the position of locksmith once?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. How did he happen to be removed from that position?

A. Several Members of the Michigan delegation thought they hadn't their share.

Q. Was this man Jones, who was appointed, a locksmith?

A. Indeed, I do not know.

Q. Have you ever heard that he had any skill at that calling?

A. No, I never knew anything about him. I know him, but that's all. I do not know what his qualifications are.

Q. The substance of it was that you yielded to the demand of the Michigan delegation without any regard whatever to the interests of the public service?

A. That's right.

"It is not surprising to find, as we do, that Jones is a persistent absentee, and not attentive to his duties when present. He was absent from the service of the House from early in April of last year until after the Christmas holidays." (Report, pp. II. and IV.)

Many other appointees have been absent without justification, both during the sessions and between sessions, and yet received pay. The librarian and his subordinates have been absent for long periods, though the House library was in a condition that would require years of intelligent labor to put it in proper order. It consists of some 300,000 volumes (many of which are duplicates) scattered from the dome to the basement of the Capitol, books being piled in unused rooms, like wood or coal. The present librarian, Mr. John J. Boobar, testified:

"It would be all right for a barnyard, but for books it was terrible." (p. V.)

He further gives an interesting description of his manner of managing a library. Among the functionaries who do duty amid this motley collection of books is one W. H. Smith, who has however, no official position upon the roll:

Q. What does he do there?

A. He loaf about there. He has been in that library so long that he does not seem to be at home anywhere else. He has had a very good run of the books—that is, especially the old books, which were down in this rubbish pile, and he knows what part of the rubbish pile to go for certain books.

Q. Has anything been paid him by any of the employees to your knowledge?

A. We have never paid him anything, except once in a while we give him a quarter or a half-dollar. He is pretty fond of old John Barleycorn, and likes a drink.

Q. Has he been provided for on the deficiency bill?

A. I understand he has been allowed an appropriation of \$600.

Q. Did you pay him any money as compensation for his remaining in the library during your absence?

A. Not exactly for remaining in the library.

Q. Any stipulated sum?

A. We had no regular sum. I paid him while I was gone.

Q. During your absence did you pay him any certain sum on account of your absence?

A. For the purpose of having Mr. Smith help *the one member of the force who was here*, yes, sir.

Q. How much?

A. Five dollars a month.

Q. How long did that continue?

A. I paid Mr. Smith in all something like \$25.

Q. For last summer.

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was that arrangement such that other members of the same force made similar contributions to Mr. Smith?

A. I think that the other boys when they were away wanted to have Mr. Smith help the man who was remaining. (pp. 83-84.)

It would thus appear from the librarian's own testimony that the business of keeping the "rubbish pile" was farmed out during vacation, at very moderate figures, to this devotee of John Barleycorn.

But Mr. Boobar's conception of the proper duties of a librarian appears very clearly in another part of his testimony. R. P. Bishop, assistant librarian (the son of Congressman Bishop, of Michigan), having testified that he, too, was absent—absent on the campaign from the time Congress adjourned and until November—Mr. Boobar was asked:



Q. In the condition of the library your force ought to be on duty the whole year; should they not?

A. Why, no, sir.

Q. With 300,000 books scattered all over the Capitol, you say your force ought not to be here all the year?

A. You see, there is very little call for books during the recess.

Q. It is not a question of call for books, but a question of putting the library in such shape that books can be found when called for.

A. The library (up to the appointment of the so-called Robert's Committee) that is contained in the basement was in such a condition that the week after I went on as librarian I went to the clerk and told him the terrible condition of affairs down there. He seemed to think that there was no way of getting those books straightened up, and indeed the work has required the labor of six or eight men for a year now.

Q. And in the meantime those men who are drawing their pay are away performing no duty. That is true of yourself and true of Mr. Bishop, and we will probably find it true of others. Is not that utterly inexcusable?

A. Well, I hardly think, Mr. Chairman, in all due fairness to the library force, they should have been asked to have taken that accumulation of books and endeavored to straighten them out. (pp. 84-85.)

Mr. Guy Underwood, who is on the rolls as a laborer, at \$720 a year, but who was detailed to the House library, and was paid \$1,800 a year by a deficiency bill, offers the following interesting statement of his views regarding the proper performance of official duty.

Q. (by the chairman). We get all sorts of communications, and among others is a communication that you have not been here more than a quarter of the time. What have you to say about it?

A. I would beg leave to vigorously deny that statement and state that I have been in the city and ready to do service probably as much as any member of the force, because during the summer I would be here and *be willing to be at the library a part of the time each day, because I had some business matters, and I could write my letters there, and it would not be in conflict with any service I could render the library.* It is a good place to be, and I spend my summer here. Last summer when Mr. Boobar went away and Mr. Sabine went away I stayed here. (p. 38.)

Mr. Underwood believes evidently that his staying somewhere in the city and being willing to be present a part of the time each day, writing letters on private business of his own, was equivalent to actual service to a library in the terrible condition described.

But there are many instances of men neglecting to perform their duties outside the library. The folders, taking the orders of Members rather than those of the Door-keeper, are absent a great deal during the vacation, and other persons are

employed and paid by special resolution to do their work. The Superintendent of the folding-room says:

"There are instances where a folder is transferred to the messenger position and his Member of Congress then considers him a messenger and I have no jurisdiction. I can't keep them and put them back to work" (p. 53)

And the Door-keeper testifies:

"I do not like to criticise Members, but that is the situation. They go and say, 'I have got to have my man home, and he must go home; it is absolutely necessary,' and he has been permitted to go." (p. V.)

The Door-keeper is further asked:

"Have there been any other cases of absenteeism except among the folders?"

To which he replies:

"No, sir. Except those who naturally go." (p. 74.)

It would appear that these two classes, "those who naturally go," and those who go through the artificial assistance of Congressmen, form a pretty large aggregate in the service of the House.

Many specific instances are given. Thus: Leroy J. Hooker was appointed clerk to the Door-keeper in May, 1897. He was absent from Washington from the day of his appointment until the following December without loss of pay. (p. V.) S. H. Morgan was "furloughed with pay" half the time he was on the roll. Mr. Lyon, the superintendent of the folding-room was asked concerning him and one or two others, "These are not the only ones who have been paid when not here?" and answered, "*There are dozens of them.*" (p. 53.)

One case is that of C. C. Leavens, a clerk in the Dewey Hotel in Washington, who "had his afternoons off," and worked in the folding-room office and in the Door-keeper's office, reporting at noon. Mr. Glenn, the door-keeper said that "He had a long line of endorsements."

But the case of E. H. Keller, of New York, deserves more extended consideration. He had been upon the roll as an employee in the cloak-room ever since July 26th, 1897. But when inquiries were made for him, other men, among them those who were in the cloak-room, could not tell who he was. (pp. 37-38, 42.) At last the Superintendent of the folding-room succeeded in placing him. "He was transferred to my department," (p. 54) says Mr. Lyon, who further testified that

during three year Keller had been at work "off and on for three or four months." The House Committee adds in its report of this case:

"It is the opinion of the Door-keeper that Keller worked six months. In any event he has not worked over six months in the nearly four years during which he has drawn pay, and has not been in Washington for eleven or twelve months." (pp. V. and VI.)

By the beneficent system adopted for the benefit of absent employees he is spared the necessity of going to Washington even for the purpose of receiving his salary. Mr. Lyon testifies on this point:

Q. Does he come here to draw his pay, or do you know?

A. No, sir, the vouchers are sent to him.

Q. Is the roll signed by him?

A. No sir, he fills receipts in the disbursing clerk's office *just the same as all the other gentlemen who go home do.* (p. 54.)

Mr. Robinson, the disbursing clerk, also throws light upon this matter, in the following testimony:

Q. Now this man Keller seems not to honor us with his presence when he draws his monthly salary?

A. In that instance when he is away he fills out receipts and puts them inside envelopes, and it is a question when he is away on leave of absence from the department that gives him permission to go. I see that his checks go to him.

Q. (by Congressman Long). And he would not have to come here in person to sign the roll?

A. No, sir. Because when a man comes in it is just like our friend Richards. When he went there he got permission from Mr. McDowell to be gone some little time and he came in and left enough receipts to cover the time of his absence. At the end of each month we send the check. I will say I am a banker at home and have followed the banking business all my life, and *I am president of a national bank now.* (p. 58.)

It is perhaps a legitimate subject of interest as to whether Mr. Robinson's system of voluntary contributions and of convenient vouchers for absent officers and employees prevails also in his bank. He further testifies:

Q. Is there any way by which you can tell from the record whether a man is present in the discharge of his work or not?

A. No, sir.

Q. How do you learn whether they are there?

A. Well, that is just like this. Here is Mr. Cannon, chairman of the Appropriations Committee, if his clerk goes away for two or three months, or if Kenedy F. Rea, or Mr. Cremer should go away, *it is no question for me to find out whether they are here or not,* and to come up to Mr. Cannon and ask if they are here. If Mr. Courts comes to us

and says he is going away for two months and he files the receipts and address in an envelope, we will mail these checks to him. (p. 59.)

It must be remembered that the disbursing office which keeps such admirable checks upon the expenditure of the public money itself costs about \$14,000 a year.

The Moody committee in its report, tells us that the present method of appointing employees has existed for many years.

It is very evident, from the foregoing facts, that the positions in the service of the House of Representatives are regarded by many members, not as places where there are duties to be performed, but as sinecures for which there is public money to be appropriated or as plunder to be divided, and the sinister question inevitably presents itself, whether honest legislation is to be expected of Congressmen who are thus guilty of withdrawing from the treasury of the United States these numerous small sums for the benefit of the objects of their patronage? Is public virtue in larger matters possible in a body where peculation of no higher dignity than petty larceny has been for many years an established institution? That there are many gentlemen in the House, besides the members of the Reporting Committee, who are dissatisfied and disgusted with such a system, and who would gladly aid in doing away with it, we can not doubt.

But the payment of salaries for services which are not performed is only a part of the evils incident to the spoils system. The recipients of this public plunder, as well as the honest employees, become themselves the victims of extortion at the hands of others. It is shown by the testimony that many of the holders of these places are subject to various forms of blackmail in the shape of political assessments, and demands for the division and distribution of salaries for the benefit of other appointees, and sometimes for the benefit of those who are not in the public service at all.

The demands for political contributions made by one office holder upon another, being a criminal act, has to be made secretly. It is natural, therefore, that Mr. John J. Boobar, the librarian, should testify that he received an *anonymous* communication which said in substance: "Please call at some certain room in the Raleigh House on some certain day," and that the communication was signed "Committee." Mr. Boobar did not call, for he was informed by employees

about the House that it was a committee "expecting to receive as donations from the different boys part of the extra month's salary that was voted at the last session of Congress." (p. 82.) He says:

"I consulted with some of the members from my State and I told them that if the object of the committee was to raise some sort of a campaign fund, that in my estimation I could make a dollar of my contribution go farther in Minnesota than that committee could make \$10 go out there."

There seems no good reason to doubt that Mr. Boobar was correct in his estimation of the efficiency of these respective contributions. Yet such assessments were paid often enough and sometimes without any knowledge on the part of the contributors as to what they were for. A curious illustration of the trustfulness of these campaign contributors is shown by the testimony of George W. Sabine, assistant librarian. Mr. Browning, the chief clerk, once asked him whether he "could not put up \$5 a month," and he answered, "Yes." He never knew the purpose of this contribution, but *thought* it was a campaign fund. He did the same thing in the following session.

Mr. Enyart, the House "telegrapher," was one of the contributors. He testifies that in the 54th Congress he gave up \$5 a month of his salary for eleven months to Mr. Robinson, the disbursing clerk.

Q. What for?

A. I do not know.

Q. How did you happen to give it?

A. Well, I do not remember exactly who it was came to me, but I am most positive it was Mr. Robinson himself, and said, we need a little money for a little while. We will have to assess some of the boys \$5 and \$10. You are a sixteen hundred dollar man and we will have to assess you \$5 a month. (p. 43.)

In regard to the division of salaries among employees the House committee reports:

"On the organization of the House in the Fifty-fourth Congress it appears that more places or places with higher salaries were promised than the officers of the House were able to discover under the law. It does not appear by whom these promises were made. There began at once a system whereby the employees agreed to contribute greater or less portions of the salaries they received for the purpose either of paying persons not on the roll or of increasing the compensation of persons who were on the roll. Of the latter class, the increases were not proportioned to the character of the services rendered or the merit of the em-



ployees, but to the supposed rights of the States or Congressional districts from which the recipients came," (p. VI.)

The political "assessor" believes apparently that the words "voluntary contribution" have a peculiar charm to stay the course of adverse criticism; that with their aid he can effectually cover the most evident cases of blackmail and extortion.

Mr. Henry Robinson, the "bank president" and disbursing clerk testifies on this subject:

Q. It is said you personally collected \$5 a month from various officials.

A. No sir, I never did.

Q. Now, we have had, Mr. Robinson, here to-day, people who said you did.

A. I think they are certainly mistaken. If it was \$5 a month for a *voluntary contribution*, or something of that kind —

Q. Call it it voluntary.

A. That may be. I think there was a voluntary contribution made back in the 54th Congress to take care of some people. (p. 56.)

And he describes the circumstances. Fifty or sixty dollars a month was paid to "take care" of a page, etc., etc.

Alexander B. Thomas, (p. 45) Arthur Lucas, John W. Lucas, and J. A. Savoy, barbers in the Republican cloak-room, were each assessed (pp. 40 and 41) \$10 a month for some eighteen months, which was paid to one Coates, a barber in the Democratic cloak-room. When Savoy was asked how he happened to pay it, he said "At the close of Congress it seems as though this man Coates had no time, and they came and told us that we would have to carry him."

Mr. Lyon the man who demanded these contributions, thus explains them (p. 50)—"As soon as he (Coates) was removed, a gentleman on that side (Democratic) came and kicked about him". And again, "A gentleman on the Democratic side suggested taking care of him in that way". (p. 51.)

It would seem to the unsophisticated that if the ejected Coates had to be "carried" or paid by assessments upon other people, the assessment ought properly to be levied either upon those who were guilty of turning him out or upon those who were interested in keeping him in. Or, if this were a political assessment for Democratic purposes it would seem that it ought properly to be levied upon Democrats. But by the higher system of ethics prevailing in this branch of the service it is the Republican barbers (who themselves receive only \$50 a month) who have to do the "carrying".

But the most flagrant case of extortion was that in which the victims were Robert Richardson and William Richardson, two colored men employed in the House bathrooms as laborers at \$720 per annum. They had been so employed for about twenty years, but in August, 1898, one W. W. Wood, a white man, was placed upon the roll and continued there for four months, taking the place of Robert, in August and October, and of William in September and November.

"We have not learned", (says the Moody Committee) "that Wood did anything besides drawing his pay. He never even appeared in the bathrooms. The Richardsons performed all the work, but each lost two month's pay. The transaction was without their consent. In April, 1900, W. H. Ridley, a colored man residing in Media, Pa., came to the bathrooms with another colored man apparently with the purpose of taking the place of one or other of the Richardsons. The final result was that the Richardsons agreed each to pay \$10 per month to Ridley, and did so by registered letters for eight months. Robert Richardson testified that this was done with the Clerk's orders; but this the Clerk denied, asserting his ignorance of the transaction. The Richardsons continued to do the work. Ridley did nothing." (pp. V-VI.)

Robert Richardson testified that on April 11, 1900, a man came to take his place.

"He said he was sent down to take the place and I showed him the place, and after I showed it to him I told him he would go to see his friends and I would go to see my friends. I went to see members whom I had served there and asked them to assist me to stay, which they did, and which I am thankful for. (p. 25.)

Q. Who did he say sent him there to take your place?

A. He said the Clerk of the House had given the place to Mr. Butler, of Pennsylvania.

Q. Did he come again?

A. He came again. He found he could not do the work and he went home, and you'll see in those papers a telegram. . . . The telegram referred to is from Congressman Butler, as follows:

"Mar. 30, 1900.

"W. L. MATHEUS:—McDowell is here and will appoint a man Ridley may bring here, providing he can do the work satisfactorily.

THOMAS S. BUTLER." (p. 27.)

After he brought the man neither one could do the work, and he wanted to get me to substitute for him and I would not agree, but they forced me so strongly William and myself virtually agreed between ourselves we would give \$16 a month and pay that together—William works with me—but he would not agree to that unless we gave him \$30 and that we would not agree to, so he went back and saw Mr. Butler and the Clerk of the House, I suppose, and the Clerk came down on the 11th of April and told us to give him \$10 apiece a month.

Mr. Overstreet : Who came down and told you ?

The Witness. Mr. McDowell.

By the Chairman :

Q. That is a pretty serious matter. Are you sure ?

A. I am as sure as I am that I am sitting in this chair.

Q. Mr. McDowell came himself —

A. And told William and myself to give that man \$10 apiece.

Q. When was that ?

A. The 11th of April and I made the date of it. . . .

Q. Was Ridley a colored man ?

A. Yes sir.

Q. How long did he do any work in the bathroom ?

A. He did not do a lick there.

Q. Did he work there a day ?

A. Not half an hour.

Q. What led you to pay this money when you knew it belonged to you ?

A. I had orders to do it, and I was afraid not to do it because I was afraid of losing the place.

Q. How much did you pay altogether ?

A. We paid him \$160. I paid \$80 and William \$80. (pp. 25-26.)

Attached to Mr. Richardson's testimony are thirteen letters from Ridley. The first three letters, written in April and May, 1900, demand \$30 a month and contain threats of "harsher methods". Two letters written in June promise Richardson that if he will secure Ridley a \$1,400 job the money paid will be refunded. The last letters are dunning letters demanding the payment of \$20, which was finally stopped. The final letter, Jan. 30, 1901, says, "I will be compelled to appeal to higher authorities if you persist in refusing to send the sum". Thus these poor negroes, Robert and William Richardson, were deprived of \$160, besides the four months' wages previously paid to Wood, and neither Wood nor Ridley ever appeared in the bathroom at all.

Another remarkable case of division of salaries is that of Mr. Alward's in respect to which the Moody Committee reports as follows :

"Dennis E. Alward entered the employ of the House in April, 1896, as superintendent of the document room, at a salary of \$2,000 per annum, and remained in that position until the beginning of the special session of the Fifty-fifth Congress. During this period, by arrangement between the respective members of the House, from whose districts the employees came, he paid at the rate of \$400 per annum to the use of Oscar J. Hill, a folder, serving as messenger at the main door. At the special session of the Fifty-fifth Congress Mr. Alward became one of the reading clerks of the House at a salary of \$3,600, and



had continued in that position until the present time. During the two years of the Fifty-fifth Congress, he paid Mr. Robinson (disbursing clerk) by some understanding the origin of which is uncertain, the sum of \$1,600 per annum for the general purposes above described. (i. e., of paying persons not on the roll or increasing the compensation of persons who were on the roll.)" (p. VII.)

Mr. Alward thus testifies to the circumstances under which he gave the money:

Q. To whom did you pay the money physically?

A. I gave the money to Mr. Gillet, asking him to hand it over. . . . Mr. Gillet said 'Now, I do not make any demand on you, or anything of that kind; I simply say to you that here is this young man to whom certain promises have been made, and you have come in here and are getting this money.' As I said, it ran along some time—two or three weeks, I guess—when finally I said to Mr. Gillet, 'Now I will give this young man so much.' . . . It amounted to \$400 a year, but I said, "I do not want to have anything to do with the young man, at all." (p. 61.)

Mr. Alward, therefore, had the money intended for the man in question handed directly to Congressman Gillet (of New York.)

Mr. Robinson, the "bank president," testifies that Alward endorsed his salary check to him. Robinson saw that Alward got \$2,000 of his own salary, that one A. C. Smith got \$1,200, and that the \$400 remaining went with other "voluntary contributions" to one McMichael. He adds:

"I wish to state here that I did not know that there was any impropriety in the matter, and that what was done was done with no other object or with any other idea than that it was right and proper." (p. 77.)

Robinson afterwards became very much confused in his statements regarding these payments and finally it was ascertained that part of Smith's salary went in turn to one Abram Setley, who was carried on the roll at \$720 as a messenger, but who was to receive \$1,200. (p. 116.)

Mr. Glenn, the door-keeper, testifies that at one time some of Alward's money was paid to one Oscar J. Hill. Hill appears to have been prudent and thrifty in the matter of his own compensation, for Glenn testifies:

Q. Did he also get anything in the Deficiency Bill?

A. Yes, sir. He got his bill through. *He was at the top of the list and it went through.*

A. C. Smith, who himself at one time paid \$400 a year out of his salary of \$1,600, does not know who got the

money. It was "Either Mr. Alward or some one else." He does not remember when these payments ceased, nor during how much of the time he got \$1,600, or how much \$1,200. (p. 110.)

Under the remarkable system in force in this branch of the service, not only is there no record of the net compensation which an employee actually receives, but the employee is often deprived of his memory as to how much he gets and how much he pays to others.

Upon the subject of division of salaries, the Clerk of the House testified as follows:

"Salaries have been divided for years, and it is generally caused by the Members; you understand that. For instance, two men draw two positions. One is \$1,200 and the other \$800. They both want the \$1,200 position; and they compromise by one taking the \$800 position and the one of \$1,200, and they figure 8 and 12 is 20, one half of 20 is 10. This is a matter which they figure among themselves." (Report, p. VII.)

Besides the divisions of salaries there were other remarkable features in this branch of the service, among them a peculiar system of service and compensation without any appointment whatever. Thus John Hollingsworth, of Missouri, a little fellow they called "Johnny", was not employed and never even had permission to go on the floor, but he went on the floor, acted as page, and was paid by a deficiency appropriation. As Mr. Bailey said, "he practically appointed himself." (P. 75.)

In other cases the evidence showed enormous salaries paid for very trifling service. For instance, a newspaper clerk, who had charge of the subscription lists and took care of the files, "which were consulted by probably twenty-five or thirty people a day", was paid \$2,000 a year, and, having little to do, was used as a proofreader in the enrolling room (p. 6), while another man (Aaron Russell), a messenger at a salary of \$1,314, brought up the newspapers and put them upon the files (p. 7).

A place which involves an indefinite amount of leakage is that of Carpenter for the House. He receives no salary, but simply "goes around and does the work" (as McDowell testifies), makes out a bill for it, swears to it, then it is approved by the Clerk, then it goes to the Committee on Accounts. The Carpenter himself designates the work that shall be done

by him. He furnishes his own material. The Clerk is unable to state how much is paid for this work, and adds (p. 109): "I have no doubt it is plenty". It seems there is one item of \$3,218.40 for packing boxes alone. And Mr. Bailey, a member of the committee, states that "worse boxes could not be got."

This committee, which investigated these abuses, states that the short time at their disposal rendered it impossible to make a complete investigation. It is perhaps ungracious to criticise a report which in the main appears to be so candid and impartial, yet it will be noticed that, while giving the names of many employees who have violated the law, the committee do not give the names of the particular Members of the House who caused its violation. In a few cases the names of the Congressmen responsible for these abuses appear in the testimony, but it would seem to be more frequently accidental than otherwise, and few inquiries are made upon this subject.

The entire force in which these abuses occurred consisted of 357 persons, and their aggregate annual compensation was about \$400,000. The question presents itself to your committee: If such abuses can exist in a force of this size, what would be the effect of the restoration of the patronage system in the 85,000 places which are now subject to competitive examination and merit tenure?

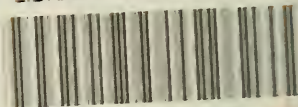
Respectfully submitted,

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